Use of grainland for non-farm purpose

478. **SHRI JAGMOHAN:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how much grainland has been lost to non—farm uses during the period 1982-1992;

(b) how much grainland has been converted into high value speciality crops; and

(c) what measures are being taken to ensure that the area of grainland per person is not reduced and the poor are not subjected to further deprivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): ta) There is only marginal decline of 0.8 million hectares in the total cultivable area which declined from 185.2 million hectares in 1981-82 to 184.4 million hectares in 1991-92.

(b) The area under foodgrains declined from 129.7 million hectares in 1981-82 to 128.0 million hectares in 1990.91, as per Land Use Statistics, showing a decline of about 1.7 million hectares during this period. During the same period, there is an increase of around **1.38** million hectares of areas under lrgh value crops of fruits and vegetables which increased from 5.08 million hectares to 6.46 million hectares.

(c) The land being fixed, the per capita grain land j_s likely to be reduced over the years with the increase in population. However, the programmes are being implemented to increase the cultivated area through reclamation of cul-turable wasteland and reducing the fallow land by extending the irrigation facilities. Further, various crop production oriented programmes are being implemented to increase the productivity pel unit of area to maximise the return from the available land resources.

Butter Oil

479. SHRI BHUPINDER SLNGH MANN: Will the Minister of AGRI-CULTURE *be* pleased to state:

(a) whether Goveianient hav, the import oi cutter oil by Naional Dairy Development Board at concessional import duty;

(b) the rates at which the butter oil will be imported and the con. allowed on such import;

(c) whether butter oil and powe? milk is at the same time allowed to be exported so as to facilitate Indian dairy farmers to compete in the intern market; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor*:*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The rate of import of butter oil depends upon the quantity available and the international prices prevailing at the time of import. The rate at present ranges from. US$ 1600 to 1770 per MT. The concession granted by tiie Gover ment to the National Dairy Develop ment Board for import is reduction in custom duty from 40 per cent to 20 per cent.

(c) and (d) There "is no question ot exporting butter oil as me same is not manufactured in India. However, milk powder is permitted for export through APEDA.

Desertification of Land

480. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: WUl the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 40 per cent of land in the country suffers from desertification;

(b) what i^s the percentage of land that has been treated so far by various measures; and

. (e) what oiher measures Governmeat proppse to lake to check desertification?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRl ARVIND NETAM): (a) No, Sir. An area uf 362 Iakh ha. accounting tc about 11% of the total geographical ,area from desertification.

(b) So far, an area of 446 iakh ha. f.23% of the total affected area has been treated under various programmes. They include, the core activities, such as land resources develop-r resources development, and tation and pasture development.

Idition to above, integrated land u ..opment, integrated, deve--opment grammes, developing dronghi preparedness and developing comprehensive anli-desertification prog-rammes are proposed to check leserti. fication in the country.

Low Yield of Indian Sheep

481. SHRI RA1ENDRA PRASAD MODY; Will the Minister of AGRI-CULTURE be pleased to state:

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(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that on an average an Australian sheep yields five kgs. of wool annually, while the corresponding figure for India is barely 700 grams; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Govern ment for increasing the production of wool and improving its quality parti-cularly in Rajasthan?

THE MTNISTER OF STATE TN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes Sir, but with the difference that the corresponding figure for India is about 900 grams.

(b) The Government has taken up several steps for sheep/wool development programmes in the country inclu, ding the State of Rajasthan with the basic objective of increasing quality ana

v of wool as well as the body weight of the animals. The Government has taken up the following programmes:

n.lral Sheep Breeding Farm, liissar for the production and of superior exotic Rams to the States.

2. The National RamjBuck Prdouetion mme and programme foi Rabbit Development. This is a 'Sponsored Programme under which State Departments ot .Animal Hu: are provided funds.

he Agriculture Development Project (Including Sheep Developd ment) with World Bank assistance is under implementation in Rajasthan State.

Agricultural Labourers ia tbe Oonntry

4S2. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Agricultural labourers in the country with State-wise details;

(b) the amount of wages they earn with details;

(c) the reasons for a large number of agricultural labourers in the State ot Bihar-

(d) whether there is any scheme to provide better employment opportunities to the labourers in Bihar: and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE TN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRl ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) A Statement showing the Agricultural Lab-ourers and Daily Wage Rates of Unskilled Agricultural Labour is annexed. (See below).

(c) The prevalence of high poverty level coupled with lack of occupational